

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REINTRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE LAST DAY OF FEBRUARY EACH YEAR AS "RARE DISEASE DAY"

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce this resolution with my colleague Rep. RICHARD HUDSON of North Carolina. Our resolution supports the designation of Rare Disease Day on the last day of February. I am pleased that this resolution has been endorsed by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and am thankful for their leadership on these critical issues over many years.

Nearly one in ten Americans live with one or more of the roughly 7,000 known rare diseases. More than half of those struggling with rare diseases—defined as affecting less than 200,000 people—are children. Sadly, many rare diseases and conditions are serious, life-threatening, and lack effective treatments. These are not just statistics: I am sure most of us know at least one family member or friend who has been affected by or struggled with the unique challenges of rare diseases.

Moreover, as we observe Black History Month, it's important to know that African Americans and other minorities are especially vulnerable to rare diseases, including Sickle Cell Anemia and Sarcoidosis. These diseases and conditions—including Thalassemia and Hereditary ATTR (hATTR) amyloidosis—disproportionately affect African Americans. Despite these unique obstacles, African Americans have an inspiring tradition of both combatting rare diseases and improving medical science.

One great example is Dr. Charles Drew, an African American scientist who helped found the modern "blood bank," which helped dramatically expand blood transfusions. A faculty member at Howard University, Dr. Drew's pioneering work in blood transfusions took place against the backdrop of segregation and discrimination. During his time overseeing the Red Cross's blood plasma donation program, Dr. Drew was prohibited from donating his own blood because of the color of his skin. Despite these obstacles, Dr. Drew's work improved the practice of blood transfusions, which is now a lifeline for many individuals struggling today with rare diseases. The examples of Dr. Drew and countless other researchers, physicians, nurses, activists, and patients underscore the importance of bringing additional awareness to rare diseases.

Despite the many challenges, some progress has been made. More than 840 drugs and biologics have been approached by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of rare diseases. However, Congress must do more to combat rare diseases. In addition, more work needs to be done to

bring attention to the needs of those who struggle with rare diseases, and to celebrate their courage. That's why Rep. HUDSON and I are reintroducing this important resolution. Each year, many individuals with rare diseases and their loved ones celebrate Rare Disease Day to share their stories and educate communities of researchers, health professionals, governments, and community organizations about how rare diseases affect them.

More than 100 countries observe Rare Disease Day. Our resolution expresses support for the designation of the last day of this month as Rare Disease Day. Congress should recognize this work and improve our efforts to address the challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting Rare Disease Day's designation on the last day of February to better champion people with rare diseases. I urge the House to support this resolution.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA'S LOCAL TRAILBLAZER, ROOSEVELT "ROCKY" RATLIFF, III, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, this Black History Month, I am proud to celebrate local trailblazers who have dedicated their lives to lifting up our community. I rise today in immense gratitude of Roosevelt "Rocky" Ratliff, III, a lifetime public servant. Born in Perry, Fla., at 2 pounds and 11 ounces, he gained the name Rocky by his delivery nurse because he was a fighter, despite his low birthweight. His parents, Roosevelt Jr. and Gloria, taught him that hard work and doing your very best in everything you do pays off. He moved to Tampa in 1984 and received his bachelor's degree in criminology from St. Leo University—becoming the first in his family to attain a college degree. He also attended Bethune Cookman University, where he was a member of the Marching Wildcats Band.

Mr. Ratliff joined the Tampa Police Department in 1998, patrolling the seven public housing properties that existed at the time. He led with his "Boots on the Ground" philosophy that stressed the importance of patrolling neighborhoods on foot to deter crime and foster invaluable relationships with the neighbors. This philosophy helped him work his way up the ranks to corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain before retiring as a major in 2018. He had a reputation for building strong community relationships throughout the City of Tampa. Because of his initiative, our communities became a safer place to live, work and play.

Major Ratliff pioneered the Community Oriented Program (COPs) in all three Districts and helped resolve community complaints and

disturbances in city parks by serving as the liaison to the Parks & Recreation Department. After 30 years, Major Ratliff retired but continued his community involvement through mentoring. He is a member of the Pi Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. that started a mentoring program at Just Elementary School for 20 young men in the fourth and fifth grades called the Gentlemen's Club. This program is vital in helping young men develop the proper skills needed to guide them throughout life and furthering their education. In addition, he is CEO of Strategic Community Engagement Consulting, LLC. He, along with Derrick Brooks Charities, developed a Community-Police Relationships (CPR) Zoom Forum to focus on addressing concerns between law enforcement and our Black and Brown communities. The Forum has been a major success throughout Florida. For decades, City of Tampa and Hillsborough County employees supported an annual local MLK tribute through a scholarship fund and downtown march, and Major Ratliff was part of that effort during his tenure at the Tampa Police Department. In 2018, he became a member of the MLK Parade Foundation. Today, the MLK Foundation hosts one of the largest MLK parades in the southeastern United States and engages with businesses, community organizations and entertainment—over the past few years, numerous bands from Historically Black Colleges & Universities have participated in the annual parade. In fact, 2022 was the first time ever that the largest HBCU bands in the country, Florida's own Bethune Cookman University and Florida A&M University, marched together.

Major Ratliff is married to Antoinette and is the proud father to four daughters, Tyrhonza, Bianca, Asia and Markayla.

Major Ratliff has always answered the call—the call to keep our community safe and the call to preserve our community's African American history. Madam Speaker, on behalf of a grateful nation and Tampa Bay community, I am proud to recognize the service and leadership of Major Roosevelt "Rocky" Ratliff, III.

COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS OF THE SUMGAIT AND BAKU Pogroms

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the 34th anniversary of the pogrom against the Armenian residents of the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan.

On February 27, 1988, and for three days following, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians—leaving hundreds of civilians dead and injured and women and girls were raped. Some victims were thrown from windows and burned alive. Tens of thousands were forced to flee.

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